



National

POISON PREVENTION WEEK PLANNER



www.PoisonHelp.hrsa.gov

PROCLAMATION GUIDE

Work with your Poison Center to secure a proclamation from your Governor, Mayor, member of Congress, or other local official for your *National Poison Prevention Week* event. An endorsement from a policymaker attracts attention from the community and the media, and often lends credibility to your efforts. **Your Poison Center may already have contacted public officials in your area, so be sure to contact them first at 1-800-222-1222 to see how you can support existing outreach efforts.**

Expanding the Reach of Your Proclamation

Here are a few ways to increase awareness of your proclamation after it has been endorsed:

Event Activity

Work with your Poison Center to hold an event where the public official actually signs the proclamation as part of your *National Poison Prevention Week* event.

Media Outreach

Coordinate with your Poison Center to distribute the proclamation to reporters who cover local, community, metro, city, education or health news. Include a press release about your event or media advisory inviting the reporter to your event or proclamation signing. Please refer to the press release and media advisory templates included in this planning guide for more details.

After you distribute the proclamation and news release, follow up with the reporter to ensure that s/he received the materials. Reporters may be interested in interviewing the local official who issued the proclamation. Also offer reporters interviews with a Poison Center representative who can better describe the event and convey its significance to the local community.

Community Outreach

Display copies of the proclamation along with fliers about your event in common areas of local public places, such as libraries and government buildings. This will encourage participation in the event. Be sure to request permission from the places you wish to post the flier and proclamation, and find out whether your Poison Center already has similar plans in the works.



Following are two examples of *National Poison Prevention Week* proclamations. Most public officials accept proclamations written in a traditional format (see Sample 1 below, which uses phrases that begin with the word “Whereas,”), but some will also accept proclamations written in a more modern format (see Sample 2 below). Please adopt the template that best addresses your needs.

Proclamation Guide: Sample Proclamation Template 1

WHEREAS: Congress designated the third full week in March to be *National Poison Prevention Week* in 1961, and since then this week has helped to raise national awareness of the dangers of potentially poisonous medicines, household chemicals, and other substances; and

WHEREAS: Each year, more than 2 million potential poisonings are reported to the Nation’s Poison Centers; and

WHEREAS: Approximately 90 percent of poisonings occur in people’s homes; and

WHEREAS: Over 50 percent of poisoning exposures involve children under age 6; and

WHEREAS: [Name of Organization(s) Hosting Event] have created [Name of Event] to highlight [Name of State or City]’s commitment to protecting its residents from potentially harmful poisonings; and

WHEREAS: The people of [Name of State or City] recognize the importance of coming together as a community to educate ourselves on poison prevention, and pledge our commitment to ensuring the safety of ourselves, our families, and our community;

NOW, THEREFORE: I, [Name], [Title of State or Community], hereby proclaim [Dates] to be *National Poison Prevention Week* in [State or Community] and encourage all to join in this observance.

[Insert City/State or Other Official Seal]

Proclamation Guide: Sample Proclamation Template 2

National Poison Prevention Week

A Proclamation by [Local Official’s Name and Title]

Since 1961, the third full week in March has been designated *National Poison Prevention Week*, focusing national attention on the dangers of poisonings and how to prevent them. Established by the U.S. Congress, *National Poison Prevention Week* is commissioned by the *National Poison Prevention Week Council*. During this week, we come together as a community to educate ourselves on poison prevention, and pledge our commitment to ensuring the safety of our families, communities, and each other.

Each year, [community statistic] possible poisonings are reported to our region’s Poison Center. Across the United States, Poison Centers handle 1 possible poisoning every 13 seconds and more than 2 million yearly. To prevent these poisonings from happening to you or a loved one, parents, teachers, nurses, and everyone in the community should take measures to ensure that unintentional poisonings are being prevented. A few ways to prevent a poisoning from happening include placing household chemicals out of the reach of children, storing items in their original containers to avoid confusion, and reading product labels, including the recommended dosages on all products. Older adults should take special precautions to understand medication safety.

To learn more about ways to help prevent poisoning, I encourage **[Name of State or Community]**'s citizens to visit the Poison Help Web site at www.PoisonHelp.hrsa.gov. In case of an emergency, individuals should contact their Poison Center by calling the national toll-free Poison Help line, **1-800-222-1222**. Poison prevention is the key to safer, healthier lives.

For the above reasons, I am asking the citizens of **[State or Community]** to join me in commemorating **[Dates]** as *National Poison Prevention Week*. I call upon all of **[State or Community]**'s citizens to observe this week by partnering with the **[Name of Poison Center]** and participating in appropriate activities to learn more about how to prevent poisonings.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration, the American Association of Poison Control Centers, the *National Poison Prevention Week Council*, and the **[Name of Organization]** welcome your participation in *National Poison Prevention Week*.

I, **[Name and title of local official]**, do hereby proclaim **[Dates]** as

National Poison Prevention Week

in **[State or Community]** and call upon our community to observe this week in support of poison prevention.

_____ Signature _____ Date

[Insert City/State or Other Official Seal]

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